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FLOOR DEBATE

February 3, 2003 LB 72

solution was found in last year's budget so we didn't have to put taxpayer money into it, and that was through the Department of Agriculture Fund. Correct?

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: It's from a federal fund, yes.

SENATOR THOMPSON: And so coming into this year, we're coming in basically at zero for the State Fair?

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes.

SENATOR THOMPSON: My understanding is, the Governor in his proposed budget has found \$247,000 of General Fund money to put...to go from zero to that number in the State Fair budget. Is that correct?

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: That's the way I understand it. Yes.

SENATOR THOMPSON: And we have not voted as a committee on that.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: That's right.

SENATOR THOMPSON: I point this out to the body because the State Fair, I believe, needs to be more self-supporting. And if we're going to put...and I understand there's some dispute on how much money this is going to cost to put this checkoff in place. If we're going to put \$50,000 of taxpayer money at risk, and supposedly everybody's going to do a checkoff for this. And if they do, and we're all correct, that's going to be great. If they don't, then we're kind of left holding the bag, which is why I believe it's controversial in committee. But we also should direct the funds to go for those things that we've been asked...been asking taxpayers to pay for, and that is the premiums and operating costs of the fair. Otherwise, this is just money that could be used for a lot of other purposes. I think it needs to be direct. If we're going to take the risk as a Legislature of putting this checkoff on, then we also should say, this money should be directed for the things we're asking all taxpayers to pay for in our budget process. Seems, to me, reasonable. I don't think we should leave it wide open, so that there's some more walking-around money for other kinds of